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AUTHOR Cohen, Arthur M.
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ABSTRACT

As part of an effort to survey members of the humanities faculty at 178 community colleges about their instructional practices, a sample of 1110 class sections was chosen by pulling every tenth section from the colleges' fall 1977 schedules of day and evening classes. Because 92 class sections were not offered, only 1018 survey forms were delivered to instructors of these classes; of these, 860 (84%) were returned. This paper summarized responses to questions on class size, course objectives, teacher expectations, use of class time, use of instructional media, satisfaction with and source of instructional materials, student class activities, stressed competencies, grading practices, attendance requirements, interdisciplinary approaches, types of assistance available, means of course improvement, and instructors' background. Average class size for all courses was 28, only 12 sections enrolled more than 99 students; 54 sections had fewer than 10 students. Overall, instructors lectured 45% of the time. Maps, charts, illustrations, and displays were cited as the most used instructional media. Nearly 19% of the instructors had a doctorate degree, revealing a rapid rate of increase in instructors with doctorates. The instructor survey is appended. (MB)

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INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES IN THE HUMANITIES, FALL 1977

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Los Angeles, California

April, 1978

Arthur M. Cohen

JC 780 504

Under a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Center asked the faculty about their instructional practices in all areas of the humanities in 178 community and junior colleges. Sampling was undertaken by pulling every tenth class section from the colleges' Fall, 1977, schedules of day and evening classes, a total of 1110 sections. Of these, 92 class sections were not offered, most due to lack of enrollment. Of the 1018 survey forms delivered, 860 (84%) were completed by the instructors and returned by our on-campus facilitators. Following is a summary of the findings.

Average enrollments per class in all humanities courses: 28

Average by discipline:

Anthropology	31
Art History and Appreciation	31
Foreign Languages	19
History	33
Literature	23
Music History and Appreciation	30
Philosophy	27
Religious Studies	28
Political Science	31
Interdisciplinary Humanities	37

Only 12 of the 860 class sections had 100 or more students enrolled; 54 of them had fewer than 10 students enrolled -- most of these were in foreign languages. The larger class sections tend to be taught by the faculty members with the most experience. The average class section for the faculty member with less than three years' experience was 21, whereas 32 students was the average class size for the faculty member with 11 or more years' experience. Similarly the part-timers tended to teach smaller classes than the full-timers.

We asked what qualities the instructors wanted their students to achieve. In a set of four goals, "Develop citizenship qualities," "Aesthetic appreciation and sensitivity," and "Language skills" drew approximately equal numbers of re-

sponses. "Learn to make better use of leisure time," drew hardly any. In another set of four desired qualities, "Understand their own and other cultures" drew 45% of the responses while "Develop their own values" got 24%, and "Abilities to study further in the field" drew 19%. The goal, "Gain respect for traditions and heritage," pulled only 10% of the responses. The third set of goals included "Develop the ability to think critically," which got more than half the responses, and "Gain qualities of mind useful in further education," which drew 30%. "Understand self," got only 11%, and "Use tools of research in humanities," drew only 3%. So we see that the humanities are perceived by the faculty as being part of the academic curriculum. They tend not to see them as useful for leisure-time activities, nor do they find them particularly important for students learning to understand themselves. The faculty value the traditional general education goals.

We asked about the amount of class time that the instructors spend on various activities. Overall they lecture 45% of the time. The foreign language teachers lecture least; the history instructors most. Class discussion occupies 21% of the class time; least in music appreciation classes, most in the literature classes. Instructional media are used ten percent (10%) of the time; the range is from 5% in philosophy classes to 26% in art and 32% in music appreciation. Student verbal presentations take up 8% of the class time on average, but the foreign languages with 23% dominate here; remove them and the average would drop markedly. Quizzes and examinations also take up 8% of class time; they are balanced across disciplines. The other choices -- guest lecturers, simulation and gaming, and field trips -- are rarely seen, although a few political

science instructors utilize guest lecturers; simulation and gaming is found in a few foreign language classes; a few of the art history and music appreciation classes spend some time on field trips.

In an attempt to determine which media are most often utilized, we asked about films and tapes and video, etc. The instructional medium used by most of the instructors comes under the heading of "maps, charts, illustrations, displays." Other media used by more than half the instructors include films and slides and audio tapes, cassettes, records. Many of them use film strips and overhead transparencies but single-concept film loops and 3-dimensional models are rarely seen. There is some variation by discipline. The anthropology instructors tend to use films heavily. The art history people use slides and film strips. Naturally the music appreciation instructors were unanimous in saying that they use audio tapes and cassettes and records frequently. The foreign language instructors also tend to use audio materials. Faculty in the large colleges tend more to use films, slides, video tapes, and media in general. The smaller colleges are will represented in the use of film strips and overhead transparencies.

We asked about the type of materials used. Nearly all instructors, of course, use texts and othes assigned books. Around 70% of them rely also on syllabi and handout materials. And from 20% to one-third of them require lab materials and workbooks, collections of readings, reference books, journal and magazine articles, and/or newspapers. The lab materials and workbooks are most frequently seen in the foreign language classes. History and philosophy instructors tend toward collections of readings. The political science instructors rely heavily on newspapers. The interdisciplinary humanities instructors are more likely to have prepared syllabi and handout materials for their students. The faculty members

with the most experience tend toward the use of collections of readings and reference books; those with least experience tend more to rely on syllabi and handout materials.

We were concerned also with the number of pages that instructors require students to read. There has been much talk about the decline in required reading in college courses and we wanted to assess these contentions. The literature and religious studies classes required the most reading, with anthropology, history, and political science also falling above the norm. The foreign languages are well below in the number of pages that they require their students to read. The average number of pages required in textbooks is 345. Around two-thirds of the instructors are well satisfied with the texts; many of the others would like to change them. Around 5% of the teachers wrote the texts for their class. Half of them had total say in the selection of texts. The small colleges seem more inclined to allow instructors to select their own texts, hence small-college instructors are more likely to be satisfied with them.

Twenty-two percent (22%) of the instructors prepare their own lab materials; 24% put together the collections of readings they use; nearly all the instructors who use syllabi prepare their own and have total say in the use of them. This raises an interesting point; textbook selection is more often a departmental matter but the instructor is free to prepare his own syllabus. Based on the syllabi we received from the instructors, however, it is easy to see why; most of them are little more than synopses of how the class is to be taught, what materials are to be read, the grading scheme to be employed.

The lab materials and workbooks typically run between 50 and 100 pages; students are required to read an average of 110 pages in collections of readings in

classes where these are utilized. Readings and reference books average 55 pages. Those instructors who require magazine articles require an average of 31 pages; newspapers, 13 pages. All materials other than the text and lab workbooks tend to be selected wholly by the instructor.

We wanted also to know about the emphasis given to various student activities such as regular class attendance, papers written outside of class, participation in class discussions, etc. We asked whether these types of activities were used and what counts toward the student's grade. Grading is determined primarily by essay exams and quick-score or objective tests, with 28% of the instructors relying heavily on papers written outside of class. Other activities are less likely to be emphasized: class discussions, 14%; papers written in class, 12%; oral recitation, 10%; regular class attendance, 10%. Field reports, workbook completion, and individual discussions with the instructors are rarely utilized.

There are many differences by discipline. The literature instructors are most likely to be concerned with papers written outside of class, but in anthropology, art history and political science, class papers are not often seen. The essay examination is most frequently utilized by instructors in religious studies, history, and literature. The quick-score or objective test is most frequently seen in the anthropology, political science, and music appreciation classes. The instructors in small colleges tend more to rely on the traditional measures: papers and exams for student grading. Just about the only instructors to require field reports are those in anthropology and art history. The oral recitations, of course, are most frequently seen in the foreign language classes.

The phenomenon of requiring regular class attendance as an important determinant of the student's grade is seen overwhelmingly in the music appreciation classes. The art history and foreign language classes also tend more to rely on student attendance, but this seems to be a matter of practically no concern to the instructors in anthropology and religious studies. Participation in class discussions is heavily emphasized by literature and foreign language instructors. It is of considerably less importance in anthropology, philosophy, art history, religion, and humanities interdisciplinary courses.

We asked the instructors which abilities should be demonstrated by students on examinations. Most important was "Acquaintance with concepts of the discipline." However, when we had asked about the goal of utilizing tools of research in the discipline, that drew practically no responses. The concepts of the discipline seem to be perceived as important but not as research tools. The least important ability that a student might demonstrate on the examination is "Relationship of concepts to student's own values." Although nearly half the instructors give high priority to the students' developing their own values, it seems they do not expect these values to be demonstrated on examinations or quizzes. "Mastery of a skill" was seen as being the least important ability that could be demonstrated on an examination. Most humanities instructors feel they deal with concepts, not skills.

We wanted to know about grading practices and found that 76% of the class sections are on the ABCDF scale, 16% on ABCD/No Credit. Pass/Fail is seen in very few classes, and Pass/No Credit or ABC/No Credit in hardly any. The grading options other than ABCDF are practically never seen in the small institutions;

any innovations in grading show up in the medium size and larger colleges.

We asked about the activities that students are expected to pursue outside of class. Lectures were the only out-of-class activity to be listed by more than 10% of the instructors when given a choice of such activities as concerts, recitals, films, field trips, museums, exhibits, etc.. Apparently, course credit is typically not given for attending out-of-class activities. However, films, television programs, museums, theatrical productions, did tend to be recommended.

The pattern of use of available assistance varies somewhat by discipline. Test-scoring facilities and clerical help are utilized most readily by the anthropology instructors; the foreign language instructors tend heavily to use tutors.

We asked about what it would take to make the class a better class and allowed instructors to check as many of the choices as applied. The overwhelming first choice was "Availablity of more media or instructional materials," with "Instructor release time to develop course and/or materials," and "Professional development opportunities for instructors," running a close second and third (More than one-third of the instructors chose these options). Practically none of the instructors opted for "Fewer or no prerequisites for admission to class," but 22% of them wanted "Stricter prerequisites." Although 13% of the instructors wanted larger classes, 27% saw the desirability of smaller classes. And while 21% (more among part-timers) would enjoy more interaction with colleagues or administrators, only 5% thought that less interference from colleagues or administrators would make the class better. A few wanted

more clerical assistance (19%) and more readers or paraprofessoinal aids (12%); 10% wanted more freedom to choose materials. There were some variations by discipline. The art history people wanted larger classes; the interdisciplinary humanities instructors overwhelmingly would prefer smaller classes (they are the faculty with the largest class sections). The art instructors would like more clerical assistance and more media. A high percent of the history and interdisciplinary humanities instructors would like to see stricter prerequisites.

Our prediction about the percent of instructors with doctoral degrees going up seems to be holding. In 1975 we found 14% with the doctorate and predicted a rapid rate of increase reaching to 20 or 22% by 1980. These data drawn from instructors in Fall 1977, showed nearly 19% of them with the doctorate.

Center for the Study of Community Colleges

INSTRUCTOR SURVEY

Your college is participating in a nationwide study conducted by the Center for the Study of Community Colleges under a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The study is concerned with the role of the humanities in two-year colleges — how they are taught by faculty, understood by students, and supported by administrators.

The survey asks questions about one of your classes. The information gathered will help inform groups making policy that affects the humanities. All information is treated as confidential and at no time will your answers be singled out. Our concern is with aggregate instructional practices as discerned in a national sample.

We recognize that the survey is time-consuming and we appreciate your efforts in completing it. Thank you very much.

1a. Your college's class schedule indicates that in Fall, 1977, you are teaching:

_____ 15-17 _____

(Course) (Section)

If this class was assigned to a different instructor, please allow that person to complete this survey.

If the class is not being taught this term, please give us the reason why, and then return the uncompleted survey form in the accompanying envelope.

b. Class is not being taught because: (explain briefly) _____

_____

_____

Please answer the questions in relation to the specified class.

2. How many students are enrolled in this class? _____ 18-20

3. What do you see as the major goal of this course? (Please describe) _____

_____

_____

_____ 21-22-

4a. Instructors may desire many qualities for their students. Which <u>one</u> of the following qualities do you most want your students to achieve?

1) Develop citizenship qualities . . . . . ☐ 1 — 23
2) Develop aesthetic appreciation/sensitivity . . . . . ☐ 2
3) Develop language sensitivity and skill . . . . . ☐ 3
4) Learn to make better use of leisure time . . . . . ☐ 4

b. Of the qualities listed below, which <u>one</u> do you most want your students to achieve?

1) Understand their own and other cultures . . . . . ☐ 1 — 24
2) Develop their own values . . . . . ☐ 2
3) Gain abilities to study further in the field . . . . . ☐ 3
4) Gain respect for traditions/heritage . . . . . ☐ 4

c. And from this list, which <u>one</u> do you most want your students to achieve?

1) Learn to use tools of research in humanities . . . . . ☐ 1 — 25
2) Gain qualities of mind useful in further education . . . . . ☐ 2
3) Understand self . . . . . ☐ 3
4) Develop the ability to think critically . . . . . ☐ 4

5. Over the entire term, what percent of class time is devoted to each of the following:

a. Your own lectures . . . . . _____ % — 26/27
b. Guest lecturers . . . . . _____ % — 28/29
c. Student verbal presentations . . . . . _____ % — 30/31
d. Class discussion . . . . . _____ % — 32/33
e. Viewing and/or listening to media . . . . . _____ % — 34/35
f. Simulation/gaming . . . . . _____ % — 36/37
g. Quizzes/examinations . . . . . _____ % — 38/39
h. Field trips . . . . . _____ % — 40/41
i. Other *(please specify)*: _____
_____ _____ % — 42/43

Please add percentages to make sure they agree with total

TOTAL: 100 %

6. How frequently are each of the following instructional media used in this class?

(Also check last box if you or any member of your faculty developed any of the designated media for this course.)

	Frequently used	Occasionally used	Never used	Developed by self or other faculty member	
a. Films	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	44
b. Single concept film loops	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	45
c. Filmstrips	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	46
d. Slides	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	47
e. Audiotape/slide/film combinations	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	48
f. Overhead projected transparencies	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	49
g. Audiotapes, cassettes, records	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	50
h. Videotapes	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	51
i. Television (broadcast/closed circuit)	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	52
j. Maps, charts, illustrations, displays	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	53
k. Three dimensional models	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	54
l. Other *(please specify)*:_____	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4	55

7. **Which of the following materials are used in this class? CHECK EACH TYPE USED. THEN, FOR EACH TYPE USED, PLEASE ANSWER ITEMS A-D.**

	A.	B.			C.		D.			
							How much say did you have in the selection of these materials?			
Check Materials Used	How many pages in total are students required to read?	How satisfied are you with these materials? Well-satisfied	Would like to change them	Definitely intend changing them	Did you prepare these materials? Yes	No	Total say	Selected them but had to verify with a chairperson or administrator	Was member of a group that selected them	Someone else selected them
56- ☐ 1 Texts and other assigned books . .	____ 57-59	60- ☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	61- ☐ 1	☐ 2	62- ☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
☐ 2 Laboratory materials and workbooks . .	____ 63-65	66- ☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	67- ☐ 1	☐ 2	68- ☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
☐ 3 Collections of readings . .	____ 69-71	72- ☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	73- ☐ 1	☐ 2	74- ☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
☐ 4 Reference books . .	____ 75-77	78- ☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	79- ☐ 1	☐ 2	80- ☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
☐ 5 Journal and/or magazine articles . .	____ 12-14	15- ☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	16- ☐ 1	☐ 2	17- ☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
☐ 6 Newspapers	____ 18-20	21- ☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	22- ☐ 1	☐ 2	23- ☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
☐ 7 Syllabi and handout materials	____ 24-26	27- ☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	28- ☐ 1	☐ 2	29- ☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
☐ 8 Other *(please specify)*										
_____	____ 30-32	33- ☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	34- ☐ 1	☐ 2	35- ☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4
_____	____ 36-38	39- ☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	40- ☐ 1	☐ 2	41- ☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	☐ 4

8. Please indicate the emphasis given to each of the following student activities in this class.

	Not included in determining student's grade	Included but counts less than 25% toward grade	Counts 25% or more toward grade	
a. Papers written outside of class	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	42
b. Papers written in class	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	43
c. Quick-score/objective tests	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	44
d. Essay exams	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	45
e. Field reports	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	46
f. Oral recitations	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	47
g. Workbook completion	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	48
h. Regular class attendance	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	49
i. Participation in class discussions	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	50
j. Individual discussions with instructor	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	51
k. Other *(please specify)*:_____	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	52

9. Examinations or quizzes given to students may ask them to demonstrate various abilities. Please indicate the importance of each of these abilities in the tests you give in this course.

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important	
a. Mastery of a skill	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	53
b. Acquaintance with concepts of the discipline	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	54
c. Recall of specific information	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	55
d. Understanding the significance of certain works or events	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	56
e. Ability to synthesize course content	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	57
f. Relationship of concepts to student's own values	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	58
g. Other *(please specify)*:_____	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	59

10. What grading practice do you employ in this class?

ABCDF	☐ 1	60
ABCD/No credit	☐ 2	
ABC/No credit	☐ 3	
Pass/Fail	☐ 4	
Pass/No credit	☐ 5	
No grades issued	☐ 6	
Other _____ *(please specify)*	☐ 7	

11. For each of the following out-of-class activities please indicate if attendance is required, recommended or neither.

	Attendance required for course credit	Attendance recommended but not required	Neither required nor recommended	
a. On-campus educational type films	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	61
b. Other films	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	62
c. Concerts, recitals	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	63
d. Television programs	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	64
e. Museums/exhibits	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	65
f. Theatrical productions	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	66
g. Lectures	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	67
h. Field trips	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	68
i. Volunteer service on educational/ community project	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	69
j. Other *(please specify)*: _____	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3	70

12a. Is this class conducted as an interdisciplinary course?

Yes	☐ 1	71
No	☐ 2	

b. IF YES: Which other disciplines are involved? _____
(please specify)

_____

_____ 72-
73-
74-

c. Are instructors from other disciplines involved . . .

	YES	NO	
. . . in course planning?	☐ 1	☐ 2	75
. . . in team teaching?	☐ 1	☐ 2	76
. . . in offering guest lectures?	☐ 1	☐ 2	77

13a. Which of these types of assistance are available to you this term? CHECK AS MANY AS APPLY.

13b. Which will you utilize this term? CHECK AS MANY AS APPLY.

	a. Assistance is available to me in the following areas	b. Will utilize this term
a. Clerical help	12- ☐ 1	13- ☐ 1
b. Test-scoring facilities	☐ 2	☐ 2
c. Tutors	☐ 3	☐ 3
d. Readers	☐ 4	☐ 4
e. Paraprofessional aides/instructional assistants	☐ 5	☐ 5
f. Media production facilities/assistance	☐ 6	☐ 6
g. Library/bibliographical assistance	☐ 7	☐ 7
h. Other *(please specify):*_____	☐ 8	☐ 8

14. Although this course may be very effective, what would it take to make it better? CHECK AS MANY AS APPLY.

a. More freedom to choose materials	☐ 1	14
b. More interaction with colleagues or administrators	☐ 2	
c. Less interference from colleagues or administrators	☐ 3	
d. Larger class (more students)	☐ 4	
e. Smaller class	☐ 5	
f. More reader/paraprofessional aides	☐ 6	
g. More clerical assistance	☐ 7	
h. Availability of more media or instructional materials	☐ 8	
i. Stricter prerequisites for admission to class	☐ 9	
j. Fewer or no prerequisites for admission to class	☐ 1	15
k. Changed course description	☐ 2	
l. Instructor release time to develop course and/or materials	☐ 3	
m. Different goals and objectives	☐ 4	
n. Professional development opportunities for instructors	☐ 5	
o. Other *(please specify):*_____	☐ 6	

Now, just a few questions about you . . .

15. How many years have you taught in any two-year college? 16

- a. Less than one year . . . . . ☐ 1
- b. 1-2 years . . . . . ☐ 2
- c. 3-4 years . . . . . ☐ 3
- d. 5-10 years . . . . . ☐ 4
- e. 11-20 years . . . . . ☐ 5
- f. Over 20 years . . . . . ☐ 6

16. At this college, are you considered to be a: 17

- a. Full-time faculty member . . . . . ☐ 1
- b. Part-time faculty member . . . . . ☐ 2
- c. Department or division chairperson . . . ☐ 3
- d. Administrator . . . . . ☐ 4
- e. Other *(please specify):*

  _____ . . . ☐ 5

17. What is the highest degree you presently hold? 18

- a. Bachelor's . . . . . ☐ 1
- b. Master's . . . . . ☐ 2
- c. Doctorate . . . . . ☐ 3

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS

If you have a course syllabus or other material that further describes your class and would like to share it, please append it to this questionnaire.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Please seal the completed questionnaire in the envelope which is addressed to the project facilitator on your campus and return it to that person. After collecting the forms from all participants, the facilitator will forward the sealed envelopes to the Center.

We appreciate your prompt attention and participation in this important survey.

Arthur M. Cohen
Principal Investigator

Florence B. Brawer
Research Director